

Moody (L.)



THE HIGHER DEMANDS OF HUMANITY

Above and beyond all the innumerable Institutions for the preservation of the public peace and good order, with which modern civilization abounds, there yet remains another, and the most important step to a complete renovation of Society, from the moral and physical evils with which it is burdened. And that step takes us directly to the primal source and root of all disorders, which are transmitted onward from generation to generation, in violation of the fundamental right of every human being to be born in good moral and physical health.

And the great problem now confronting us, and demanding solution is, how to set and continue in motion such pre-natal influences, as shall make the hereditary tendencies of future generations wholly good? So that little will be required from the environment or surrounding conditions to keep posterity entirely in the line of spiritual and physical health, and right moral action; and so take off a large share of the burdens with which civilized society is laden. And in the sincere hope that what is therein contained will meet with your cordial approval and support, your attention is respectfully called to the following statements and

PROSPECTUS.

The problems of social disorder,—of disease, poverty, vice, crime, have taxed the highest wisdom of the greatest philosophers, statesmen and publicists in all periods of history. In his ideal Republic, Plato seems to have made the nearest approach to its solution, by training his guardians under the laws of Heredity. Since his time immense progress has been made in knowledge of the laws of life and social relations; and numerous writers, with their thousands of readers and students of more comprehensive scientific knowledge than Plato ever dreamed of, are now traversing this deeply interesting and most important field of inquiry.

The profoundest thinkers are convinced of the futility of all the means employed, to put an end to, or any effective check upon, the diseases and sufferings with which humanity is burdened. And they have traced back these evils to inherited habitual tendencies, which originated in the earlier barbarous conditions of the race; which gained strength during its cruder civilizations, and so at length became the family heritage. And they are further convinced, that this is not the normal condition of the race. That it has been wholly induced by practices and habits long continued from generation to generation, which at length became transmitted by the laws of heredity, as organic tendencies.

And what has been done by habits can be undone by reversing the processes, or discontinuing the habits.

It is now clearly established, that the causes of our human degradation and loss, and the means of our elevation and gain, are within us. The way of redemption, and ascension to higher life is by a right use of those powers and faculties, the perversion of which has resulted in so much suffering and misery to our race. The generative power must be educated, trained, and guided by the highest wisdom and scientific culture, as the only sure foundation of effective and permanent reform.

We restrain, govern, and direct the operations of nature in the breeding of horses, cattle, sheep ; in the production of fruits, flowers, and other departments of biology, while in this transcendent field of human culture, which so deeply concerns the welfare of our race, we suffer them to run wild, according to their own blind, wayward impulses.

No one thinks in advance, what sort of people it is desirable to have born, and to live here, as members of our common family. And so no care whatever is taken in the preparation of the souls or bodies of those who are to usher them into existence, and send them to their tasks in life's work-fields. And so people suffering from disease, and with hereditary tendencies to vice and crime, are constantly sowing broadcast the seeds of private and public disorder in their offspring. Hence about forty per cent. of all the children that are born, die and are hurried into the earth before they are five years old. And of those who come to maturity, what numbers are idiots, lunatics, drunkards, thieves, murderers,—who continue to burden and afflict society with their own wretched progeny without a word of remonstrance from any quarter.

What breeder of live stock would rest content with seeing nearly one-half of colts, calves, lambs, &c., die before they were one quarter grown? and of those which came to maturity, a large per cent. diseased, misshapen monstrosities ; and others so vicious and ugly, as not only to be useless but dangerous ; and so sent to the pound or slaughter-house to keep them from doing mischief. Our Churches, Masonic Lodges, and other associations, sit in judgment on the moral and physical characters of proposed members ; and exclude, and even expel, those that are unfit.

And yet, such are the facts in regard to the character of a large number of those who enter in the structure of General Society, that we are compelled to support an immense array of courts, sheriffs, constables, jails, prisons, lunatic asylums, hospitals, &c., with standing armies of policemen, armed with club and revolver, to protect us from the peace-breakers of our own begetting. And in spite of all these, the night-prowling thieves, burglars, and assassins, fill us with such a sense of insecurity, that we can hardly sleep in our beds.

Century after century have Church and State, with all their vast, complicated and cumbersome machinery, enforced their empirical methods with terrible penalties and at tremendous cost, for the purpose of putting an end to these evils ; and with the most wretched results. And above all this, what vast amounts are expended in voluntary contributions of money and labor in the various forms of charitable relief, with the same hopeless and unsatisfactory results. And for the reason that we have battled against effects, while leaving causes in unchecked operation.

The causes are congenital. People who are born with theft and murder in the blood, will steal and kill. The jailor and hangman neither cure them nor check their tendencies, nor thin their ranks. For as fast as we imprison and hang criminals, others are born to take their places. So that all our conflicts with evil, result in a long-drawn battle.

Shall we forever continue the old treadmill process? The wheel forever sinking down as we climb, and we forever no nearer the top? Why should we continue to weary and exhaust ourselves in this endless circuit, with all the means of deliverance in our own hands, and under our own control?

If disease and death are transmitted from our first parents by the law of heredity, the atonement and reconciliation are in the transmission of health and life to our posterity by the same law. So the way of escape is right onwards and upwards.

The true way of regenerating the race, is through scientific generation. The demand of the time is, that we lay the right foundations of character, by fixing the organic tendencies of children, in moral and physical health, before birth.

And this demand is founded on natural law and the convictions of science. And only requires the same enlightened culture in this, which guides our conduct in other relations. And in this, as in other relations, there must be light,—knowledge.

“Lust, and avarice, and anger,
Creep in the black jungles of man's ignorance.”

It is in ignorance and darkness, that wild, untamed, lawless passions find their most convenient burrowing-places :—that the evil surmisings of uncultured imagination, riot to both private and public injury. And all the restraints and repressive measures, of law and public opinion combined, have failed, and must forever fail, to put an end to these evils, so long as the passions are left to wander in darkness, without the guidance of an enlightened understanding. The moral pestilence walks in the darkness of ignorance ; while the light of knowledge, in its very nature, purifies and elevates the mind and affections.

And on this subject, the doors and windows of knowledge must be thrown wide open. Light must be let in, and the goblins of disease, and sin, and suffering must be driven out by radical and thorough education and culture.

And here also, will be found, the only means of preserving the innocence and purity of childhood. From age to age, the established guardians of the public morals have held that it is not safe to impart knowledge on the subject of generation ; about which knowledge is so much needed and desired. And when the wondering child comes to father or mother with curious questionings, he is at once silenced with a commanding “Hush !” and goes away wondering and questioning still more.

The child grows to youth ; and stealthily obtains some snatches of knowledge which only sharpen his appetite for more. And that appetite leads him to swallow with avidity, whatever information he may obtain on this subject, however foul it may be, with merely sensual, profane, and degrading associations. And if the obscene book-vender finds here a market for his wares, it is because we have unlawfully withheld knowledge, which it is the lawful right of every human being to possess.

And if we would not have the minds of our children profaned and corrupted, our only safeguard is, to impart to them all needed and desired knowledge, in a pure, chaste and elevating way. Then, their minds being filled with the true light, there will be no room or desire for that which is false. And then, there being no demand for his wares, the occupation of the obscene publisher will be gone.

But, if we still keep our children in ignorance and darkness, from our moral constitution, and the very structure and necessities of the human soul, the laws of our being will avenge themselves on our cowardice and pusillanimity, by thrusting into their vacant minds, such partial, distorted, and even debasing knowledge as by any means may come in their way ; and against which we are so zealously but vainly trying to guard.

The initial point of such a work must be established somewhere. And we should begin at once to train the young,—our future responsible citizens,—to regard it as a high crime and misdemeanor, to bring children into the world, laden with hereditary tendencies to disease, or vice, or crime. For on becoming public burdens, such children, *in obedience to the laws of compensation, only react the crime first committed against them.*

A movement of such vast and immeasurable importance to the human family, must be conducted by persons of the highest wisdom, courage and devotion to public duty. And in the earnest hope and expectation that such persons will soon appear ready for their work ; as a co-laborer therein, and as preliminary steps towards the formation of an

INSTITUTE OF HEREDITY,

which shall found a library, establish lectureships, with schools of instruction, and take in hand the diffusion of knowledge on the subject of improving our race by the laws of physiology,—

I propose, with the aid of such as may volunteer their patronage and support, to open a school and lecture-room in Boston, with the nucleus of a library, for such conversations, consultations, and illustrated lectures, as may awaken interest, and lead on towards a realization of these great and beneficent ends. But little, however, can be accomplished single-handed and alone. As the movement will encounter misunderstanding, opposition, and even ridicule and reproach, from ignorance, prejudice and bigotry, it must be sustained by the highest wisdom, prudence and forbearance. Hence it will need the sympathy and co-operation of every enlightened philanthropist and reformer.

A movement of this sort will go back to the origin of individual life, and the very root of social order and well-being ; and the public mind and feeling must be educated to an exalted and abiding reverence for everything pertaining to sex. For the true Shakinah is man ; wherein dwells the holiest. And the holiest in man is sex ; which incarnates the sacred mystery of motherhood and fatherhood ; and the highest ministry of God in the reproduction and perpetuation of the human family.

And this PROSPECTUS will be sent to those presumed to be interested in the deepest problems of social science, and to comprehend the need and importance of such a movement to the peace and security of society, and the welfare of our race. And from all such, contributions of books, pamphlets, essays, bearing on the subject, to be placed in the library for study and reference ; and also for the means of supplying the lecture-room with physiological apparatus, are respectfully solicited. Due notice will be given of the initial lectures, which will commence as soon as sufficient encouragement is afforded.

Correspondence on this subject, with full and open expression of views, or any form of aid to the proposed movement, addressed to the undersigned, at Boston, Mass., will be gratefully acknowledged.

LORING MOODY.

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